Hi Scott:

Thank you for your reply of March 4. This email responds to the specific questions you posed to us by unit. However, in addition to these unit-specific comments, we are collectively preparing a request for NSM money to hire temporary hourly staff to facilitate the huge movement of materials between PHX, GEX and ENX (as well as Oak Street and STX). The unit comments are based on funding to hire an hourly staff member as well as student wages to make the movement of materials a reality.

PHYSICS/ASTRONOMY LIBRARY

We agree the Physics/Astronomy Library doors will be closed following spring semester 2009, however, due to the timing of finals week we request this date to be sometime between June 1-June 30, 2009 and in agreement with the department of Physics. The two PHX staff members, Gregg Homerding and Sandra Holloway, can be reassigned before June 30th. After July 1, materials will be requested via call slip from PHX by Grainger staff; during the transition time, Physics graduate students and faculty will maintain keys to the “library.” There is a Memorandum of Agreement being negotiated between Library Administration and the Departments of Astronomy and Physics.

GEOLOGY LIBRARY

We agree the Geology Library doors will be closed August 15, 2009. We request that Diana Walter remain in the Geology Library for a period of one year (to August 2010) and that Sheila McGowan continue in GEX part time for one year (to August 2010), combined with a part time appointment in Grainger, to facilitate the move of materials. We further request that Lura Joseph be given an office in NHB on the second floor near departmental offices for the most effective use of her time (along with her office in Grainger). It will be imperative to coordinate the Geology move with CAM, focusing on analytics for book series and assuring full bibliographic records for monographs headed to Oak Street.

MATHEMATICS LIBRARY

The PSED recommendation for the near-term future of the Math Library goes beyond simply cutting hours and reflects the outcome of an analysis based on both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data included anecdotal interactions with Math & Stats Department faculty and students, regular conversations with Department Chairs (past and current), conversations with the Math Department faculty liaison. Quantitative data included gate counts, in-library journal use studies done over the last 6 years and circulation data.
Since the PSED proposal was written, the Math Department, on the initiative of its Chair and EC, has enriched both sets of data by surveying current and past faculty. The new data so far shared with the Mathematics Librarian (in confidence) generally tend to confirm the preliminary PSED recommendation, albeit suggesting some small amendments -- e.g., 9 AM - 5 PM might be better for weekday hours than 10 AM - 6 PM and that the Library should seek a way to add evening hours 1 day a week. Our understanding is that Professor Katz and the Math Department EC have a letter to the University Librarian in draft which will provide general and constructive comments and suggestions for her to consider. Our sense is that the PSED recommendations will be found to align well to this anticipated input from the Department.

While the fact that the Math Department does not want to and will not be able to easily repurpose current Mathematics Library space is a significant consideration (especially in the eyes of the Department Chair who suggested this point be mentioned explicitly), the PSED proposal offered additional, arguably more important reasons for the proposed changes -- in particular noting that it would not be feasible to relocate to Grainger the 100,000+ volumes in the Mathematics Library. This should be recognized as a compelling argument, especially given that the Math Library print collection continues to be heavily used as evidenced by circulation statistics and observed in-library use. Moreover, this use is not confined to recently published materials mostly or only, nor to one segment of the collection only, but is quite broad, encompassing in particular older materials which have not yet been digitized and are unlikely to be digitized anytime soon. As a result it should not be assumed that the bulk of the 100,000+ volumes in Altgeld can be relocated to Oak Street.

Since the PSED recommendation was submitted, additional, positive rationales for maintaining the Math Library service point and its collection in Altgeld Hall have surfaced from the Math Department. We understand that the Department's letter to the University Librarian will note that as one of the top 5 academic math libraries in the nation, our Math Library has been and continues to be useful in recruiting top quality mathematicians to Illinois. This will continue to be the case even if the Math Library is staffed at a modestly reduced level; it will not be as much a draw (in the judgment of the Dept.) if the Math Library were to be consolidated into Grainger. A quality math library and math library collection is for math faculty recruitment what top-notch laboratory facilities are for engineering faculty recruitment. The importance of this consideration should not be underestimated. We also note that the Math Library has enjoyed and continues to enjoy strong support from current and emeritus faculty and Department graduates. In-kind gifts of books are frequent. Cash contributions from alumni and current and emeritus faculty exceed $10,000 most years and over the course of the last decade, the Math Library has received individual gifts of $100,000 and $50,000. Department support is strong as well, with the Department having permanently transferred $25,000 in base budget during the 1990's. Data gathered by the Department suggests that these sources of gifts will dry up almost entirely should the Math Library's identity be subsumed into Grainger's.

PSED and the users of the Math Library are sensitive to the need for streamlining and trimming services to save resources. It was in this spirit that we offered suggestions for meaningful savings in staffing and the operations of the Math Library. These service reductions will be disruptive and not without
consequences, although we anticipate that some impacts can be reduced or ameliorated through thoughtful consolidation of selected services at Grainger and through creative thinking about how to work around the most severe potential impacts.

We believe that if the changes recommended are carefully implemented, Mathematics Library staff member Becky Burner could be moved full or part-time to Grainger beginning July 1, 2009 and that upon his return from sabbatical, Mathematics Librarian Tim Cole could be reassigned to work at Grainger on high priority (Library-wide) digital library projects for up to 50% of his time.

CHEMISTRY LIBRARY

Your directive concerning the Chemistry Library's proposed merger with materials supporting the School of Molecular and Cellular Biology (SMCB) asks that we instead consider the total migration of Biology materials to the Chemistry Library, creating a "biochemistry" library. Diane Schmidt agrees that this proposal is not feasible based on the size of both collections and the desire to create a Life Sciences Library in ACES. We continue to feel strongly that the best combination of chemistry and biology collections is a sub-set merger of Biology Library materials, specifically MCB materials moved to the Chemistry Library, creating a "Chemical Biology Library." Each portion of this merged collection (chemistry/MCB) would encompass about 6,000 volumes of monographs (totalling 12,000 volumes), meaning a equal split of subject emphasis. All services for this truly blended library will be incorporated and administered from the renamed library in 170 Noyes Laboratory.

In order for the chemistry and MCB journal collections to be merged, it is critical for the UIUC Library to purchase the Oxford University Press e-journal backfile package, estimated at about $73,000. This broad, 5-discipline package also includes a considerable number of math journals (1/3 of the package) as well as engineering and geology titles. This purchase will aid multiple science (and other) disciplines and allow many more volumes to be moved to Oak Street.

We estimate that this equal sharing of the 170 Noyes Laboratory space between chemistry and molecular and cellular biology will significantly increase the number of users served by reserves, circulation, reference and study space. We intend to expand these services without an increase in staff or student wages, greatly enhancing cost-effectiveness.

Please let us know about any further questions or concerns you have concerning our New Service Model proposals.

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